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TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT.

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1942

BY

R. DE VEIL KING, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

TAUNTON:
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TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF, 1942.

Medical Officer of Health and Medical Superintendent of the Taunton Joint Isolation Hospital and Somerset County Council Tuberculosis Sanatorium, Taunton:

R. de V. King, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
Telephone: Taunton 3389.

Sanitary Inspector:

R. H. Gardner, C.R.S.I. (appt. March, 1911)

Additional Sanitary Inspector:

E. G. Payne, C.R.S.I. (appt. Feb., 1936)

Matron, Isolation Hospital and Tuberculosis Sanatorium:

Miss M. Milner, S.R.N.
Address: Taunton Isolation Hospital,
Cheddon Road.
Telephone: Taunton 2396.

Clerk to the Council:

P. O. Cowlishaw, Mary Street House, Taunton.
Telephone: Taunton 2285.

TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT.

Statistics for the Year 1942.

Area (in acres)	70,675
Estimate of Resident Population	18,710
Census Population, 1931	17,101
No. of inhabited houses according to the Rate Books, on December 31st, 1942	4,928
Rateable Value—31st December, 1942	£97,794
Sum represented by a 1d. Rate, 31st December, 1942	£418

Extracts from the vital statistics.

Live Births:—

	Total	M.	F.	
Legitimate ...	244	131	113	Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ... 13.68
Illegitimate ...	12	10	2	
	256	141	115	

Still Births—Total 8.

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births 30.3
Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ... 0.42

Deaths—Total 187.

Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ... 9.99

Deaths from Puerperal causes—

	Deaths.	Rates per 1,000 births.
Puerperal Sepsis	—	—
Other Puerperal causes	1	3.78

Deaths of Infants under one year of age—Total 6.

Death Rate of all Infants per 1,000 live births 23.43

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	26
,, ,, **Measles (all ages)**	—
,, ,, **Whooping Cough (all ages)**	—
,, ,, **Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)**	1

Rates for England and Wales as a whole:—

Live Births	15.8	per 1,000 civilian population.
Still Births	0.54	,, ,, ,, ,,
Deaths, all causes ...	11.6	,, ,, ,, ,,
Maternal Mortality, all causes,	2.01	per 1,000 total Births.
Infant Mortality	49.0	,, ,, ,, ,,

Causes of Death during 1942.

Cause of Death	M.	F.	Total
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	—	—	—
Cerebro-spinal Fever	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	—	—
Diphtheria	—	—	—
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system ...	2	4	6
Other forms of Tuberculosis	1	2	3
Syphilitic diseases	—	—	—
Influenza	2	3	5
Measles	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioenceph: ...	—	—	—
Acute infectious Encehpalitis	—	—	—
Cancer of buccal cavity, oesophagus, uterus	1	—	1
Cancer of stomach and duodenum	3	7	10
Cancer of breast	—	3	3
Cancer of all other sites	6	6	12
Diabetes	1	1	2
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	13	10	23
Heart disease	24	25	49
Other disease of the circulatory system ...	3	—	3
Bronchitis	7	3	10
Pneumonia	2	5	7
Other respiratory disease	1	2	3
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	2	—	2
Diarrhœa under 2 years	1	—	1
Appendicitis	—	1	1
Other digestive disease	4	2	6

Causes of Death during 1942 (continued).

Cause of Death.	M.	F.	Total.
Nephritis	5	4	9
Puerperal and post-abortion sepsis	—	—	—
Other maternal causes	—	1	1
Premature birth	—	2	2
Congenital malformation, birth injuries, etc.	1	1	2
Suicide	—	—	—
Road traffic accidents	2	1	3
Other violent causes	—	3	3
All other causes	12	8	20
All causes—Total ...	93	94	187

Infant Mortality during 1942.

Cause of Death.	Under 1 week.	1 to 2 weeks.	2 to 3 weeks.	3 to 4 weeks.	Total under 4 weeks.	1 to 3 months	3 to 6 months.	6 to 9 months.	9 to 12 months.	Total under 1 year
Prematurity	1	—	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	2
Congenital Malformation	—	—	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	2
Pneumonia	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Gastro-Enteritis ...	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Totals ...	1	—	1	2	4	1	1	—	—	6

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

The Hospitals, Clinics, Treatment Centres and Ambulance facilities remain as described in the Report for 1938. Cothelstone Manor Hostel for unbilletable evacuees such as enuretics, problem children, etc., continues its good work. Sick evacuees or those suffering from contagious diseases are admitted to Belmont Sick Bay in Taunton Borough for treatment.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Circular 2773 from the Ministry of Health states that no reference should be made to activities in connection with war-time extensions of water supply or sewerage works or other public utility undertakings. Public cleansing was described in the Report for 1939; since April 1st, 1942, the only addition has been that the Council collect household refuse from all the parishes in the Area. The average amount of collection per month is 45 three-ton lorry loads.

Salvage of the following materials was made during the year:—

	Tons.	Cwts.	Qrs.
Paper	110	10	3
Iron	143	—	3
Non-ferrous Metals	—	18	1
Bones	7	15	1
Rags	5	18	—
Rubber	18	12	—

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following tabular statement is furnished by the Sanitary Inspectors:—

Number and nature of inspections during the year:—	
Dwelling houses	37
Slaughter houses	651
Bakehouses	29
Other premises where food is prepared or sold	8
Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops	246
Places where animals are kept (other than Cowsheds)	2
Infectious Disease enquiries and disinfections, etc.	33
Factories, Workshops and Workplaces ...	48
Miscellaneous	115
Number of Notices served during the year:—	
Informal Notices	29
Statutory Notices	0
Result of service of Notices:—	
Total Notices complied with	24
Notices standing over at the end of 1942 ...	2

Shops and Offices. Under the provisions of Sec. 13 (3) of the Shops Act, 1934, relating to ventilation, temperature and sanitary conveniences of shops, 26 visits have been made.

Camping Sites. The local authority have not found it necessary to issue any licences in respect of these, as advertised camping sites appear to fall within Section 269 (2) of the Public Health Act, 1936.

Smoke Abatement. There has been no necessity to take action under Section 101 of the Public Health Act, 1936, as there have been no complaints.

Swimming Baths and Pools. There are not any in the area.

Eradication of Bed-bugs. No Council or other houses have been found to be infested with bed-bugs.

Schools. The sanitary conditions and water supply of the schools in the area are satisfactory. Owing to the number of school-age evacuees in the area, accommodation has been found for them in various village halls, institutes and clubs.

Offensive Trades. There is one Offensive Trade in the district within the meaning of Section 107 of the Public Health Act, 1936, for Tripe Boiling.

Public Water Supplies. The four public supplies have been examined quarterly and have on each occasion proved satisfactory.

Bakehouses. There are 21 Bakehouses in the district and 29 inspections were made to them. Seventeen Bakehouses now draw their water supply from public mains.

Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food. The County Council undertakes this work. With the exception of samples of milk, no other foods were sent to the County Laboratory for examination during the year.

Meat Supply. Under the Live Stock (Restrictions on Slaughtering) Order, 1940, slaughtering of animals for human consumption is carried out only at certain specified slaughterhouses, and the meat after inspection is distributed over a very large area within and without the district. The inspection of meat under these conditions takes up a large portion of the time of the two Sanitary Inspectors. The following table shows the number of carcases inspected and the number of parts thereof condemned as unfit for human consumption:—

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known)	12	20	15,862	8,086	849
Number inspected ...	12	20	15,862	8,086	849
All diseases except Tuberculosis.					
Whole carcases condemned	0	0	7	11	0
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	0	4	89	220	96
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	0	20.0	0.6	2.8	11.2
Tuberculosis only.					
Whole carcases condemned	0	0	0	0	4
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	0	7	2	0	45
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	0	35.0	0.1	0	5.7

The following were also condemned as being unfit for food:—

19 Tins of Corned Beef.	400 Meat Pies.
2,267 Tins of Fruit Juices, Soups, etc.	64 lbs. of Bacon.
700 Tins of Condensed Milk.	28 lbs. of fresh Fish.

Milk Supply.—246 inspections were made to 369 registered premises in the area, and 151 samples of milk were taken and examined by the County Bacteriologist. The analytical results are as follows:—

Designation.	No. of Samples taken.	No. found satisfactory.	No. found unsatisfactory.	Percentage unsatisfactory.
Tuberculin Tested	43	33	10	23.25
Accredited	82	57	25	30.5
Examined for tubercle bacilli	26	25	1	3.8
	151	115	36	23.8

These results are far from good.

Tuberculosis Order, 1925.—6 cows had to be slaughtered during the year under this Order.

Milk and Dairies Order, 1926.

Number of Producers on the Register 369

Number of Distributors on the Register divided as follows:—

(a) Distributors only 14

(b) Distributors who are also Producers ... 35

Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1936 and 1938.—Under this Order, the following licences are in force in the District and issued by the County Council:—

Licences: Tuberculin Tested producers 13

Accredited producers 19

In addition, there is one Supplementary Licence issued by the Local Authority for the sale of Pasteurised Milk in the District but which is not produced therein.

HOUSING.

There has not been any overcrowding during the year. There are 779 less evacuees in the district than in 1941.

Three houses condemned under the Housing Act, 1936, at Athelney, Stanmore and North Curry were given temporary licences for re-occupation; and three others at Creech St. Michael, Stoke St. Gregory and West Monkton had their licences renewed. This re-occupation of condemned houses is not an infringement of Sec. 155 (3) of the Housing Act, 1936, as it is a War Emergency measure designed to meet the housing needs of the influx of agricultural workers and covered by Regulation 68A, Defence (General) Regulations, 1939. These houses are inspected by the Medical Officer of Health, who reports to the Council the minimum repairs, etc., necessary to bring them in such a condition of cleanliness and repair as to be reasonably capable of being used as a temporary wartime measure for housing purposes without detriment to health. Where the owner has complied with the recommendations, the Council may issue a licence authorising the occupation of a house, but the licence is not operative for more than six months at a time.

GOVERNMENT EVACUATION SCHEME.

Up to December 31st, 1942, the following individuals were oilleted in the District:—

Unaccompained Children	357
Accompanied Children	84
Mothers, Helpers, Teachers	159
TOTAL	600

This is 779 less than in 1941.

PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following gives the number of notifications for notifiable Infectious Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) and the rates per 1,000 of the estimated resident population in the district (excluding Military) compared with the rates for England and Wales as a whole :—

Disease.	No. of Notifications.	Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population.	
		Taunton R.D.	Eng. & Wales.
Scarlet Fever	10	0.53	2.19
Diphtheria	3	0.16	1.05
Measles	3	0.16	7.46
Whooping Cough ...	25	1.33	1.73
Erysipelas	8	0.42	0.30
Paratyphoid "B" ...	1	0.05	0.01
Cerebro-Sprinal Fever ...	1	0.05	0.14
Ophthalmia Neonatorum..	1	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	7 (Rate per 1,000 total births)	26.51	12.61

The high notification for Puerperal Pyrexia has been influenced by the presence of an Evacuee Maternity Home in the district. Four out of the 7 cases were notified from the Home, and if these were excluded the notifications for the district would be 11.36 per 1,000 total (live and still) births.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

During the year, 155 school children and 100 pre-school children were immunised against Diphtheria. This work is done by the Medical Officers of the Somerset County Council and by General Medical Practitioners. During 1941, these figures were 1,563 and 446 respectively. The response to immunisation may be considered as satisfactory. The figures given do not include evacuee children.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1942.

Ages in Years.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Resp'tory.		Non-Resp.		Resp'tory.		Non-Resp.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 — 1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 — 5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 — 10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10 — 15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 — 20	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
20 — 25	1	1	—	—	1	1	—	—
25 — 35	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	1
35 — 45	4	2	2	—	1	2	—	1
45 — 55	4	1	—	—	—	—	1	—
55 — 65	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
65 and up	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	14	6	3	—	2	4	1	2

The Tuberculosis Register shows that at the end of the year there were residing in the District, 85 cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and 28 cases of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

No action had to be taken under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, relating to persons suffering from Tuberculosis in the Milk trade, nor under Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936, relating to the campulsory removal to hospital of persons suffering from Tuberculosis.

Prevention of Blindness.

The Local Authority have no special arrangement of their own under Sec. 176 of the Public Health Act, 1936, for assisting in the prevention and treatment of Blindness. Cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum are promptly notified to the applicable Department of the County Council and so obtain early treatment and if necessary in the Isolation Hospital.

Report of the Medical Superentendent of the Taunton & District Joint Hospital Board for the year ended 31st December, 1943.

NOTES.

Hospital administration during the past year has been extremely difficult owing to the shortage of Nursing and Domestic Staffs and the employment of non-resident women. The Matron has overcome many difficulties and, with her usual perseverance and energy, maintained a high standard of work in the Hospital so that the patients have not suffered. The number of Nursing Staff days was 4,989, the lowest on record even during the years when half the work was done at the Hospital. The Nursing Staff has throughout the year kept stable at about two-thirds of the normal number.

The Domestic Staff has consisted of 4 resident and 6 non-resident women, which is about 25% less than the normal requirements.

The Laundry Staff has remained stationery, four non-resident women being employed. By careful management, the Matron has been able to save 2 to 3 tons of fuel monthly by getting the laundry work completed in four days per week, despite the fact that during the year the Board agreed after representations from the County Medical Officer of Health, to undertake the whole of the disinfecting and laundry from Belmont Sick Bay, and the sterilizing of dressings, etc., from the Emergency Unit Maternity Home at Tetton House, Kingston. This fuel saving has been a very creditable performance.

The outdoor staff of two men remains normal, but their work, too, has been augmented owing to the increased use of the steam disinfector which takes up one man's whole time for two to three days a week.

SANATORIUM.

Admissions:		Discharged:		Deaths:	
Males ...	10	Males ...	4	Males ...	6
Females ...	20	Females ...	15	Females ...	5
Total ...	30	Total ...	19	Total ...	11

Total patient days—6,690.

The beds have been kept full throughout the year.

The deaths during 1942 have been the lowest on record.

The extra work entailed by using the Isolation Hospital Theatre for Artificial Pneumo-thorax refills continues, and 83 refills have been administered and the Theatre used almost weekly.

R. DE V. KING,
Medical Superintendent.

Isolation Hospital,
Cheddon Road, Taunton.
March, 1943.

TAUNTON AND DISTRICT JOINT ISOLATION HOSPITAL BOARD.

Tabulated Statement for 1942.

	Admitted.	Brought forward 1.1.42.	Remaining 31.12.42.	Discharged.	Died.	Scarlet Fever.	Scarlet Fever & Diphtheria.	Diphtheria.	Mumps.	Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis.	C.S.M. "Carrier"	Tubercular Meningitis.	Erysipelas.	Measles.	Pneumonia.	Tonsilitis.	Chicken Pox.	Septic Abortion.	Puerperal Sepsis.	Nursing Mothers.	Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	Contact Infants.	Paratyphoid "B".	Poliomyelitis.	Enteritis.	Foreign Body in Larynx.	Vincent's Angina.	Cerebral Hæmorrhage.	Scabies.	Dysentery.	Otorrhœa.	Appendicitis.	Rheumatism.	Influenza.	Patient Days.
Constituent Authorities.																																			
Taunton Borough ...	115	3	20	96	2	82	1	10	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3392
Wellington Urban ...	18	3	4	17	0	15	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	694
Taunton Rural ...	17	2	1	18	0	6	0	3	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	537
Wellington Rural ...	17	1	2	15	1	8	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	368
Bridgwater Rural ...	18	2	1	19	0	16	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	391
Dulverton Rural ...	3	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	81
Other Authorities ...	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	131
War Office	6	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	148
Maternity & Child Welfare.																																			
Somerset C.C. ...	51	2	3	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	36	2	6	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1320
Taunton Corporation ...	6	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	165
Private Case	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	17
Staff	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	45
	259	13	31	237	4	130	1	15	4	10	1	2	4	5	2	11	2	3	42	2	6	4	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	7289